United Nations

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- The five Permanent Members of the Security Council and the two Co-Chairmen of the Paris Conference on Cambodia declare that they will take coordinated action in support of Secretary-General's efforts to prevent unauthorized repatriation of Cambodian refugees.

- Secretary-General appeals to Governments concerned in Middle East region to cooperate with his efforts to free detainees and hostages in Lebanon.

- Secretary-General's Personal Representative for Central America says negociations between Government of El Salvador and FMLN are "moving along in positive and constructive fashion", despite "considerable complexity" of pending issues.

- Director-General of Vienna Office says social issues must be main theme of 1990s to avoid conflicts within countries as well as between North and South.

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The five Permanent Members of the Security Council and the two Co-Chairmen of the Paris Conference on Cambodia have declared that they would take coordinated action in support of the Secretary-General's efforts to prevent "forced repatriation" of Cambodian refugees on the Thai border.

The Secretary General's Spokesman said today that the Secretary-General's Special Representative on South-East Asia, Rafeeuddin Ahmed, had met yesterday with the representatives of the five Permanent Council Members and the two Co-Chairmen to inform them about the Secretary-General's concern regarding the unauthorized plan.

The Secretary-General had received information indicating that such a plan existed outside the framework of the agreement on a comprehensive political settlement of the Cambodian conflict, which is to be signed in Paris on 23 October.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar had appealed to Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the President of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia, to urge the parties concerned not to implement any unauthorized plans for the repatriation of refugees.

In a letter of reply of 15 October, Prince Sihanouk stated that he had sent a special message to the leadership of the parties of Democratic Kampuchea asking then not to proceed with any forced repatriation. He had further asked them to return to their camps any refugees that may have been repatriated forcibly, as well as to comply with the voluntary repatriation programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Prince Sihanouk stated that he had asked the parties to attend a meeting at his residence in Paris on Monday, 21 October, which would also be attended by UNHCR representatives. He reaffirmed his support for the proposals made on the matter of refugees by the UNHCR and the Secretary-General.

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The Secretary-General said today through his Spokesman that his Personal Delegate, Giandomenico Picco, who was currently in Damascus, Syria, had informed him this morning that negotiations on his behalf on the release of hostages and detainees held in Lebanon were continuing and that they were "moving ahead".

Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar appealed to all Governments concerned in the region to cooperate with his efforts at this particular juncture.

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Negotiations are continuing in Mexico City between the Government of El Salvador and the representatives of the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) on steps towards a final accord on settlement of the 11-year conflict in that country.

Commenting on the outcome of the talks yesterday, 16 October, in Mexico City, the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for Central America, Alvaro de Soto, said negotiations were moving along in a "positive, constructive and business-like fashion". It was clear, in his opinion, that both sides wanted to reach an agreement as "rapidly as possible", but that the remaining pending issues were of "considerable complexity".

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Social issues should be one of the major, if not the main theme of the 1990s, if the twenty-first century was not to find itself wracked by internecine conflicts within countries and between North and South.

(more)

This was stated yesterday by the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and Head of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, Margaret J. Anstee, in an address in the General Assembly's Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural).

She went on to say that everywhere, developing countries, as well as those in Eastern and Central Europe, were being sent the message that espousal of free market and private enterprise was the way out of poverty and underdevelopment.

However, she said, there were many problems to which the market provided no socially acceptable solutions. Experience at the United Nations Vienna Office had shown that the market, when left to its own devices, did not respond to many needs, national as well as international. "Indeed, it all too often sends social issues to the wall", she said.

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